

September 30, 2003

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service,
CC Docket No. 96-45;**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

John Stanton (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Western Wireless) and I had *ex parte* conversations on September 26, 2003, with the following members of the Joint Board on Universal Service: FCC Commissioner Abernathy and Alaska Commissioner Nanette Thompson. We discussed the base and scope of high cost universal service support and the Eligible Telecommunications Carrier designation process. These issues are pending in the "portability" proceeding that is before the Joint Board. No materials were distributed.

On September 23rd and 24th, Jim Blundell and Gene Dejordy delivered an *ex parte* presentation to Florida Commissioner Lila Jaber and to New York Commissioner Thomas Dunleavy. The attached document was distributed.

If you have any questions, then please contact me at 202-654-5903.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Rubin
Director of Federal Government Affairs